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Foreign Labor Trends

Thailand



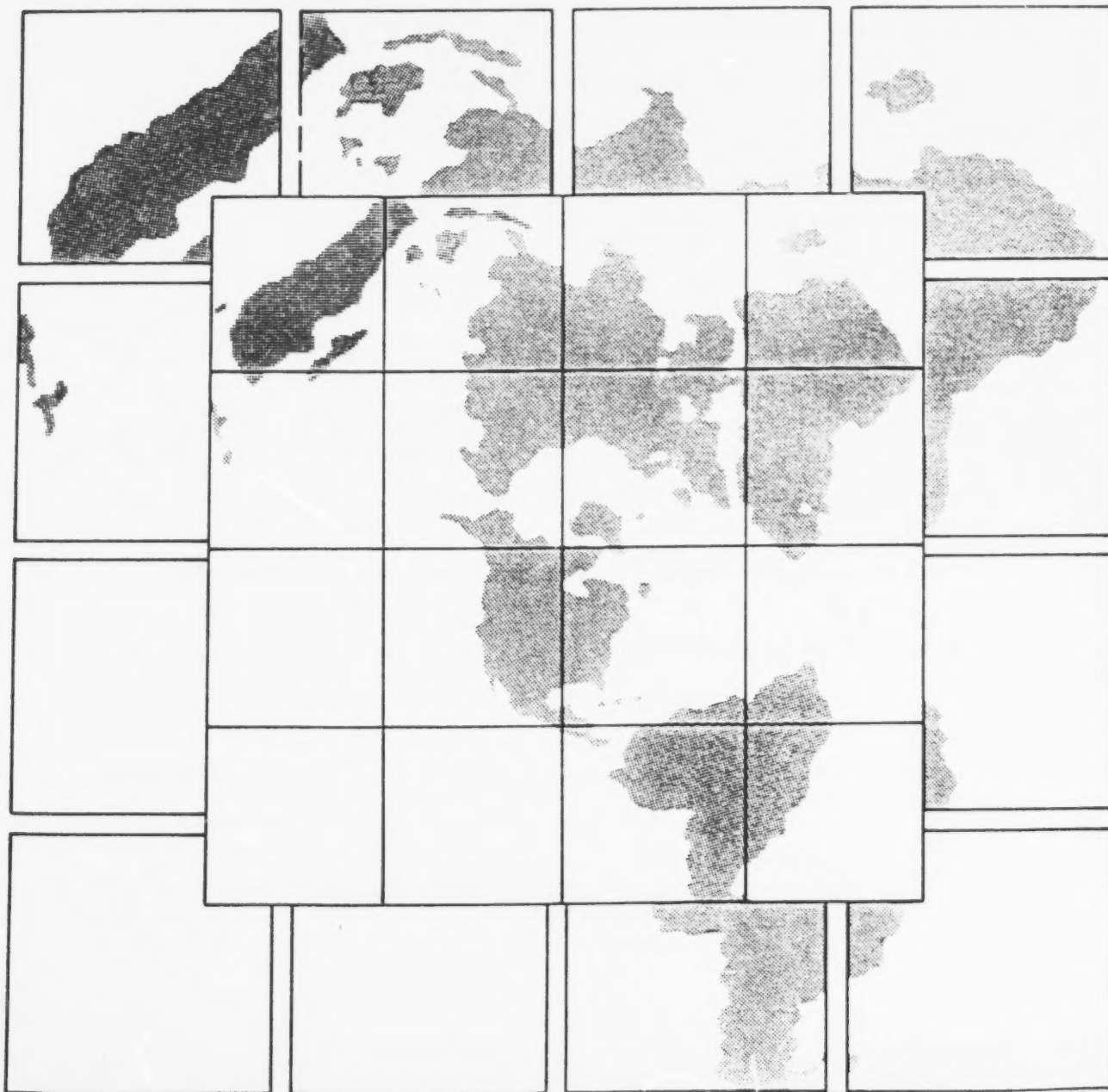
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FOREIGN LABOR TRENDS REPORT

THAILAND

1988

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Key Labor Indicators

	1986	1987	% Change
1. Per cap. GNP, current prices: U.S.\$	775.2	879.0	--
Baht	20,364.0	22,599.0	11.0
2. Per cap. GNP, const. 1972 prices: U.S.\$	283.6	319.2	--
Baht	7,697.0	8,207.0	6.6
3. Total population (millions)	52.97	53.87	1.7
4. Population growth rate (%)	2.26	1.70	--
---, in urban areas	2.44	1.88	--
5. Birth rate per 1,000 population	18.00	16.50	--
6. In-migration by nationality	n.a.	n.a.	--
7. Out-migration	n.a.	n.a.	--
8. Life expectancy at birth (years)	1985-1990		
Male	62.24		
Female	66.19		
9. Adult literacy rate (pct): 1980			
15 years and older	88.0		
10. Adults in on-the-job training	n.a.	n.a.	--
11. Adults in other job-related study	n.a.	n.a.	--
12. Total labor force (millions)	28.04	28.94	3.2
13. Total employment (millions)	26.14	26.97	3.2
in industry, manufacturing, mining,			
utilities, trading, & construction	6.20	6.56	5.8
in services	2.83	3.00	6.0
in agriculture	17.12	17.41	1.7
14. Unemployment rate (pct)	6.80	6.80	--
15. Underemployment rate	n.a.	n.a.	--
16. Labor productivity in manufacturing	n.a.	n.a.	--
17. Work-related accidents and illness (000)	38.4	43.6	13.6
18. Work time lost, ind. disputes (000 hrs)	1,302	714	-45.1
19. Minimum wage rates: Eff. 1/1/89 (US\$1=25.2 Baht on that date)			
A. 76 baht per day for 6 provinces: Bangkok Metropolis, Samut Prakan, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Samut Sakhon, and Nakhon Pathom			
B. 73 baht/day for 3 provinces: Ranong, Phang-nga, and Phuket.			
C. 69 baht/day for 4 provinces: Chonburi, Saraburi, Nakhon Ratchasima, and Chiang Mai.			
D. 63 baht per day for the remaining provinces.			
Min. wage rates will be increased again on 4/1/89, as follows:			
A. From 76 to 78 baht			
B. From 73 to 75 baht			
C. From 69 to 70 baht			
D. From 63 to 65 baht			
20. Age. real wkly. earnings, by ind. (US\$)			
Manufacturing, mining, pub. utilities	36.41	n.a.	
Construction	33.33	n.a.	
Services	42.97	n.a.	
Others	27.24	n.a.	

Key Labor Indicators, con't.

	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>% Change</u>
21. Avg. wkly. earnings, by occupation (US\$)			
-Prof., admin., mgr., related workers	78.83	n.a.	--
-Clerical, sales, services	34.21	n.a.	--
-Agriculture	21.28	n.a.	--
-Production, transport, all others	25.00	n.a.	--
22. Unionization of workers (pct.)	11.65	12.71	--
23. Avg. personal income per year			
at current prices (US\$)	600.89	669.44	9.03
(baht)	15,785.30	17,211.31	9.03
24. Avg. disposable income after taxes			
and mand. withholding (US\$)	585.01	653.04	--
(baht)	15,368.21	16,789.54	9.25
27. Pct. pop. below poverty level (est.)	29.5	n.a.	
28. Rate of change in consumer prices			
during preceding year (pct.)	1.9	2.5	--
29. Trade with U.S. (US\$ million)			
Thai exports (f.o.b.)	1,576.3	2,167.5	32.00
Thai imports (c.i.f.)	1,314.0	1,618.5	20.55

Note: Thai-source trade statistics differ considerably from those compiled by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Exchange rates used for currency conversions are as follows:

1986: US \$ 1.00 = 26.27 baht 1987: US \$ 1.00 = 25.71 baht

Sources: Thai Department of Labor, National Statistical Office,
National Economic & Social Development Board, Ministry
of Public Health, Thailand Development Research Institute

INTRODUCTION

The year 1988 saw Thailand's best economic performance in recent memory. Real growth was estimated at no less than 10.3 percent for the year as a whole, up from 6.6 percent in 1987. All sectors contributed to this strong growth, which was led by export-oriented light manufacturing, construction, energy, tourism, and reversing a stagnant trend throughout this decade, agriculture. New investment poured into Thailand in 1988: over 5,000 new factories representing a total investment of about \$1.4 billion were set up, and over 1,000 other factories expanded. Some 150,000 new jobs resulted from these investments.

Also, 1988 was a year of considerable political change in Thailand. Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda dissolved parliament in April, called for new elections, and then declined to stay in office after an 8-year tenure. This paved the way for Chatichai Choonhavan to become Thailand's first elected leader in 12 years. The new government was quick to demonstrate responsiveness to the concerns of Thai workers and further stimulated the economy by stepping up government spending to relieve infrastructure bottlenecks. A new dialogue between labor and government was opened by the new Prime Minister leading to significant concessions, particularly on wages.

Against this dynamic backdrop, the organized labor movement showed newfound strength and unity in 1988 as the four labor centers joined hands in the new dialogue. The demise of labor's charismatic spokesman since the mid-1970's ironically opened the door for increased cooperation among previously competing forces within Thai labor. To be sure, tensions remained, particularly between stronger state enterprise unionists and their weaker private sector counterparts, but overall the trend was toward greater solidarity. Major accomplishments of the labor movement were increases in the minimum wage and state enterprise salary schedule, the introduction in parliament of a social security bill, and increased attention to "loopholes" in the Thai labor relations law which unionists alleged employers were using to suppress worker rights. Unionists in state enterprises also called attention to their concerns about privatization, though in fact the Chatichai government appeared no less inclined than its predecessor to push for more private sector participation in public services despite state enterprise union (and management) opposition.

Despite these general gains, significant labor problems remained in Thailand. A serious shortage of qualified technical and middle management personnel, particularly

engineers, is an impediment to economic development that will persist well into the 1990's. Human resource development, in general, lagged behind progress in other areas of economic development. Symptoms of this deficiency included an alarming trend toward overproduction of liberal arts graduates from Thai universities and a low rate of enrollment--30 percent in one estimate--in secondary schools among primary school leavers. The potential consequences of these two phenomena were, on the one hand, a growing class of educated liberal arts graduates and, on the other, a critical shortage of engineers and other skilled technicians. A proposed solution was the revision of the secondary school curriculum to make it more relevant to market demand. Additionally, Thailand's gradual evolution from a predominately agrarian society to an increasingly industrialized one is raising concerns about the environment and health and safety problems in the workplace.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN THE ORGANIZED LABOR MOVEMENT

This was also a year of reorganization for the Thai labor movement. The March death of Phaisal Thawatchainan, President of the Thai Trade Union Congress (TTUC) and past President of the Labor Congress of Thailand (LCT), was first anticipated as a major blow to the movement but instead appeared to pave the way for increased fence-mending and cooperation among the new generation of labor leaders. He was succeeded at the TTUC by Wattana Ieumbumroong, President of the Telecommunications of CAT Workers' Union and concurrently President of the powerful State Enterprise Relations Group. TTUC Vice President Ekkachai Ekharnekamol, the apparent front-runner going into the election, withdrew from the race in the face of Wattana's challenge. Ekkachai appeared to have consolidated an alternative power base in December when he was elected to succeed Wattana at the State Enterprise Relations Group after the expiry of his 2-year term.

At the end of 1988, Wattana and LCT President Thanong Podhiarn resumed their dialogue on the eventual consolidation of the TTUC and LCT into one federation, a proposal previously agreed to by Phaisal and Thanong in 1987. The one current in 1988 which defied the trend toward greater unity was the proposal by metalworkers' union leader Preecha Simisap to form a fifth labor center for private sector industrial workers. It was unclear at the end of the year whether the plan would go forward in 1989.

A summary of key leaders in the Thai labor confederations, as of December 31, 1988, was as follows:

Thai Trade Union Congress (TTUC)
Wattana Ieumbumroong, President
Panich Charoenphao, General Secretary
Labor Congress of Thailand (LCT)
Thanong Podhiarn, President
Chalee Chantawong, General Secretary

National Congress of Thai Labor (NCTL)
At Sri-At, President
Panas Thailuan, General Secretary

National Free Labor League (NFL)
Anusak Boonyapranai, President
Preecha Thitayanawong, General Secretary

State Enterprise Relations Group
Ekkachai Ekharakamol, General Secretary
Somboon Sabsarn, First Deputy General Secretary
Naris Lumsuwan, Second Deputy General Secretary

THE CHALLENGE OF ORGANIZING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Organizing new unions and expanding membership remained key goals of the Thai labor centers in 1988. The total number of registered unions rose in 1988 to 562 from 514 in 1987, while the total union membership increased to 295,900 from 272,600; the total number of employees in unionized work places (i.e. potential members of existing unions) reached 489,500 in 1988. Well over half of all union members were employed in the state enterprise sector, which remained the backbone of the Thai trade union movement. Unions in the private sector were still small, diffuse, and weak in most instances. There was broad agreement within the movement to focus organizing efforts on the emerging industrial estates around Bangkok, but organizing success there was slow and limited. Unionists complained that their efforts were undermined by an unsupportive government policy toward unionization, lack of effective protection against anti-union discrimination, the widespread abuse of temporary work contracts, and the ease in organizing in-house unions.

POLITICAL CHANGE ENHANCES LABOR'S INFLUENCE

The April 1988 dissolution of parliament, subsequent elections, and Prem's withdrawal from politics gave labor an opportunity for newfound influence--which they effectively capitalized on. One of Wattana's first moves at the TTUC was to renounce all links between

the TTUC and the Community Action Party (CAP) led by former Deputy Prime Minister Boonchoo Rojanastien, leaving the four centers unaffiliated with political parties. Leading up to July parliamentary elections, the TTUC, LCT, NCTL, and NFLL jointly organized seminars to present their views to candidates in the parliamentary elections and to solicit the parties' support for increased wages, social security legislation, a halt to privatization, and revision of labor relations law. Several political parties formally endorsed the labor positions in their platforms.

A series of state enterprise strikes in May-June further underscored labor's increasing role--and skill--as an interest group. In particular, a strike in June at the State Railway of Thailand (SRT), culminating in government's written agreement to all its demands, was an effective demonstration of labor's potential power. Indeed, other state enterprise unions, notably at the port and other public utilities, were encouraged by the success at SRT, and they too flexed their muscles in lesser strikes or slowdowns, adding considerable tension to the pre-election political climate. There were press allegations of "outside interference" in the labor unrest, but most observers saw the role of "outsiders" as providing moral support for--rather than instigating--the unrest. Citing its caretaker status, the Prem government made no further commitments but agreed to listen to labor and consider its views. Furthermore, while strikes at state enterprises are illegal in Thailand, the government did not use force or make any arrests to restore order. Labor finally backed down as it saw no further gains to be made at that time. Furthermore, the approach of a major royal celebration made continuation of the labor unrest a nonstarter in the Thai socio-political context.

THE CHATICHAI GOVERNMENT COURTS THE LABOR MOVEMENT

Immediately following his selection as Prime Minister in August, General Chatichai made sympathetic comments about the situation of Thai workers, promised to increase the minimum wage and consider other key demands, appointed his son as his unofficial "labor advisor," and held the first in a series of direct informal meetings with key unionists. The Deputy Interior Minister in charge of labor affairs, Vatana Asavahame, also exhibited unprecedented responsiveness in meeting with unionists and supporting certain demands in cabinet discussions.

By year end, Vatana had effectively cultivated the trust and respect of many unionists. There was remaining concern, however, about Vatana's advisory relationship with former LCT leaders Ahmad Kamtestong and Sawat Loogdod, among others. Charges against both leaders stemming from the 1985 coup attempt were dropped in early

1988, enabling them to resume their long-standing relationship with the Deputy Minister following his appointment in August. Public allegations arose that Vatana and the two former LCT officials were interfering in the September LCT by-elections with an aim toward ousting LCT President Thanong. In the end, Thanong's slate won the election, and he remained in charge at the LCT.

In the private sector, 1988 was a year of continued--and indeed increased--industrial calm. Both the number of industrial disputes and the number of work hours lost declined in 1988, according to preliminary statistics released by the Thai government. There were three notable exceptions to this trend. Strikes at a textile firm and at two steel factories over basic working conditions deteriorated and left several hundred workers unemployed. By mid-year they became the causes of sustained protests at Government House and elsewhere in Bangkok involving thousands of workers, often making common cause with other laborers, including state enterprise unionists. Unionists argued that each of these incidents of labor unrest represented examples of unfair clauses of existing labor relations law which they demanded the government to correct. For example, they demanded that the law be amended to preclude factories from going out of business during an industrial dispute. The government committed itself to a review of these demands, the legal provisions criticized by the workers, and labor's proposals for amendments, but no formal changes were effected in 1988.

Late in 1988, the Thai government issued a directive to deal with the issue of work stoppages in state enterprises. Strikes per se are not legal, so state enterprise workers resort to "extraordinary meetings" as a means of enhancing their bargaining power vis-a-vis the government. In December, the Finance Ministry, acting on a recommendation of the State Enterprise Committee headed by Deputy Prime Minister Thianchai, directed state enterprise management to allow such meetings no longer to take place on their premises. The effect of this directive was uncertain at year end.

WAGE AND SALARY HIKES APPROVED FOR ALL

The focus of much of the new dialogue between government and labor was wages. In view of the country's strong economic growth, labor argued for substantial wage increases to more equitably spread Thailand's increasing wealth to workers. Chatichai's early award of a long-delayed salary increase to civil servants--many of whom had not been receiving minimum wage--spurred both private sector and state enterprise unionists to demand the same. (The minimum had last been raised in April 1987, while public enterprise salaries had been frozen since 1982.) General strike threats in both October and November brought the government to address and, finally, accept both demands. The final award to state enterprise

workers, who are generally better paid than their private sector counterparts, was somewhat less than the amount originally agreed to by Vatana, however. Thus, civil servants, public enterprise employees, and private sector workers all received varying wage increases effective January 1, 1989, with the minimum wage slated for a further increase on April 1, 1989.

The battle over wages and salaries in both the private and state enterprise sectors generally brought unionists from both areas together, but it also generated tensions between the two groups. There was some criticism in the media that the state enterprise unions had abandoned the cause of the private sector workers after the government agreed to a general increase for state enterprise employees. In fact, the campaign for increased remuneration in both sectors was marked by unprecedented coordination and unity, but the exceptions to this unity did allow outsiders to criticize the labor movement. More importantly, it fuelled internal tensions within the movement among those inclined to challenge existing leadership of the labor centers. A potential consequence is the pending move to create a new labor center composed entirely of private sector workers under the leadership of Preecha Simisap.

MEANWHILE, TECHNICAL LABOR SHORTAGES ARISE--AMONG OTHER CONCERNS

The wage and salary hikes notwithstanding, Thai economists and policymakers continued to express concern about the widening income disparity and persistence of poverty (estimated at over 25 percent of the population in 1988) in Thailand. The country increasingly was seen as evolving into two distinct economic spheres, a NIC-like center of industry, trade, and government around the capital surrounded by a sea of rural, agrarian-based poverty, especially acute in the populous Northeast. Efforts to encourage decentralization through such measures as investment incentives, lower rural wage levels, and improved infrastructure to link rural Thailand with the capital and main ports have not had an important impact on these problems. Strong agricultural growth in 1988, estimated at 8.6 percent, provided some relief but did not offer a long-term solution, since it was due to favorable climatic conditions and commodity prices over which Thailand has little or no control.

While there remained a surplus of semi-skilled and unskilled labor to supply continuing industrial growth, critical shortages emerged in middle management and skilled technical fields. A particular dearth of engineers was experienced as the result of the growth surge in manufacturing, petrochemicals, and other relatively higher-tech fields. Total demand for engineers was estimated at over 7,300 in 1988, while only 2,684 engineering graduates were produced in Thailand. This shortage of engineers is expected to last through the middle 1990's, to be filled in the meantime by

increased expatriate hiring, crash vocational instruction courses, accelerated graduation of Thai engineering students, "reverse brain drain," and a broad reassessment of industry needs in view of supply shortages. Economists in 1988 also began to predict a shortage in the mid-1990's of the relatively unskilled labor which has been a leading factor to the current boom, and a resultant dramatic increase in wages; shortages of agricultural labor were foreseen for the same time frame.

Overall, there appeared to be no increase in unemployment in 1988 over the previous year: the official government figure was 6.8 percent for both periods. However, this figure clearly masked the increasing inability of many Thai workers to secure suitable employment corresponding to their training and education. The National Statistical Office estimated that over 120,000 college graduates--mostly in social sciences--were unemployed in 1988. A typical job opening in teaching or the government attracted over 40 applicants. Job fairs in rural areas usually found employment for only the minority of their participants. And increasingly scarce overseas employment opportunities often were "sold" to the highest bidders. Among other things, this information reflected an alarming positive correlation between level of education and incidence of unemployment in Thailand.

PRIVATIZATION REMAINS CHIEF CONCERN OF STATE ENTERPRISE LABOR

Given the strength of unionism in the state enterprise sector, privatization remained perhaps the leading concern among Thai unionists following the settlement of their wage and salary demands late in 1988. Officially, the Chatichai government moved away from the open confrontation with labor over privatization that had characterized the Prem regime, replacing the word "privatization" with "the enhancement of the role of private industry in the delivery of public services" in official documents. In fact, the new government was even more committed to at least the partial privatization of selected, existing state enterprises than its predecessor; it also looked more to the private sector for incremental infrastructure. The government sought to increase total investment in Thailand's inadequate infrastructure without unduly jeopardizing the country's fiscal position or external debt level, putting strong pressure on state enterprises to finance expansion through equity rather than debt. Likely targets for eventual public listing on the Securities Exchange of Thailand included Thai Airways International, the Telephone Authority of Thailand, and the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand--not coincidentally Thailand's most profitable state enterprises. Additionally, many new infrastructure projects, including ports, roads, and mass transit, were slated for implementation on concessionary or otherwise privatized bases despite sustained opposition from both labor and management in the state enterprise sector.

A primary concern of state enterprise labor in their opposition to privatization, as in other countries where privatization has been pursued, was job security and provisions for dealing with redundant employees. Under the Prem administration, there had been relatively little dialogue--and a great deal of polarization and animosity--among labor, government, academic, and business representatives considering privatization issues. The basic government strategy was drawn up with neither specific input from labor, attention to workers' concerns, nor specific provisions for dealing with labor redundancy. Indeed, where privatization of state enterprises has taken place since 1987, it has tended to exacerbate confrontation with dismissed workers. For example, the Preserved Food Organization of the Ministry of Defense closed late in 1988, leaving some 450 former employees with a collective severance pay award of less than \$300,000 and no guarantee of new jobs. This followed three similar privatizations in 1987 in which workers received minimal monetary compensation and neither training nor new jobs.

State enterprise unionists, with the support of certain academics and labor organizations, have sought to open a constructive, formal dialogue with the Chatichai government on developing a privatization strategy which would take into account their interests. However, even with the Chatichai government's more accessible posture vis-a-vis Thai labor, there was little real progress on that dialogue in 1988.

A PROPOSED LABOR BUREAU IN THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT--AGAIN

A proposal to upgrade the Department of Labor of the Ministry of Interior into a full-fledged ministry has been a perennial feature of the Thai political landscape for years. It arose again in 1988 under the Chatichai government, linked to an upgrade for the Police Department. Both would be given "Bureau" status, a notch below full Ministry level but nonetheless headed by a minister. It was expected that the proposal would be scrutinized during the Spring 1989 session of parliament. Enactment would address the anomaly of Thailand's being the only country in Asia without a labor ministry, and increase the likelihood that labor concerns would receive appropriate weight in cabinet deliberations and decisions. However, skeptics noting the long history of the proposal suggested that this time around it was geared more toward expanding the cabinet for political reasons than for increasing labor's representation within the government--if indeed it would be enacted at all.

SOCIAL SECURITY LEGISLATION PASSES ITS FIRST READING

The Government's proposed social security legislation passed its first reading (of three required) in parliament in October 1988. It will be reviewed again during the 1989 parliamentary session. If it becomes law, the modest social security program will cover sickness, childbirth, death, disability, and nonemployment related sickness and injury, initially covering ten provinces and about 300,000 workers. It would substantially enhance coverage for workers, now limited to a workmen's compensation program covering only work-related sickness and injury. Workers already covered by other plans, such as civil servants, state enterprise workers, and certain private sector employees, would be unaffected by the new legislation.

REMITTANCES FROM THAI OVERSEAS WORKERS STILL IMPORTANT

Overseas employment in 1988 was a leading source of foreign exchange for Thailand with estimated remittances of \$919 million, up from \$840 million in 1987. Of the total estimated 268,000 Thais working abroad on a temporary basis, about 202,000 were located in the middle east, particularly in Saudi Arabia. Increasingly, labor shortages in East Asian Newly Industrialized Countries (NIC's), Malaysia, Brunei, and Japan were providing employment opportunities for Thai workers as well. The Thai government opened a number of overseas labor offices in 1988 to improve its surveillance of overseas workers and employment conditions, and to insure that Thai workers were not exploited or denied due process. The location of Thai overseas workers for 1987-88 was as follows:

<u>Location</u>	<u>No. of Workers</u>
Saudi Arabia	150,000
Libya	25,000
Kuwait	8,000
Iraq	6,000
Qatar	4,000
United Arab Emirates	3,000
Bahrain	2,500
Others	<u>3,500</u>
Subtotal - Middle East	202,000
Singapore	25,000
Malaysia	10,000
Brunei	9,000
Hong Kong	6,000
Japan	6,000
Others	<u>10,000</u>
Subtotal - Asia	66,000
Total - Worldwide	268,000

INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONNECTIONS WITH THAILAND

Thailand in 1988 was again the locus of international labor organization efforts to expand or relocate their presences in Asia. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) pursued but eventually dropped its request to transfer its regional Asia-Pacific Regional Office (APRO) to Bangkok from New Delhi after the Thai government failed to consider it before a self-imposed deadline; APRO moved some of its operations to Singapore instead. Some critics of the Thai government's reaction to the APRO matter believed that it had temporized on the application in order to avoid also having to approve a pending request for a Bangkok office from the Soviet-backed World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU). Others argued that the Thai government was disinclined to permit the expansion of any foreign labor organization in Thailand, regardless of its ideology.

Several international organizations with labor programs operated in Thailand during 1988. The Asia-Pacific regional office of the International Labor Organization (ILO) welcomed Tadashi Nakamura, formerly a senior official in the Japanese Labor Ministry, as the new ILO Assistant Director-General to its Bangkok regional headquarters in August. The Asian-American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI) of the American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) maintained its long-standing Thailand program emphasizing training, organization, institution building, and democratic principles. AAFLI support was vital to pursuing labor's agenda in virtually every area of concern, including labor law reform, cooperation and unity among the four labor centers, improving labor's portrayal in the Thai media, health and safety issues, lobbying for political and legislative change, expanding organization of private sector workers, etc.

On two occasions, the Thai government admonished foreign labor organizations, the ICFTU's Public Services International (PSI) and the West German Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), for organizing labor seminars which it viewed as having infringed on Thai domestic matters. The two issues considered were state enterprise salary levels and social security. No punitive measures were taken, but most observers viewed the government's admonitions as "drawing the line" between acceptable and unacceptable program areas involving the Thai labor movement.

WORKER RIGHTS: A CONTINUING CONCERN

International and domestic concern about alleged violations of worker rights in Thailand continued in 1988. The issue remained on the U.S.-Thai bilateral agenda as the AFL-CIO filed

its second consecutive petition calling for removal of Thailand's access to the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program on the basis of its record on worker rights. The United States decided against accepting the petition because it failed to provide substantial new information about the worker rights situation in Thailand and in view of assurances from the Thai government that a number of reforms were in train. Most particularly, the United States welcomed the pending reform of law or regulation affecting child labor, including an immediate increase in the minimum age from twelve to thirteen years. A number of other specific recommendations were communicated to the Thai government during and after the formal reviews conducted by the American government in 1988. By the end of the year, however, none of the pending changes in either the labor relations or labor protection regimes in force in Thailand had been effected.

Concern about working conditions for children in Thailand also was strongly articulated by critics in Great Britain, the Netherlands, and elsewhere in Europe. Similarly, Thailand was strongly criticized for the widespread existence of prostitution, often involving children as well. Documentary films on these subjects were critically acclaimed in their home countries, but strongly denounced as biased and anecdotal by the Thai government.

APPENDIX

Acronyms Common in Thai Labor Parlance

AAFLI	Asian-American Free Labor Institute
ATI	Association of Thai Industries
ECOT	Employers' Confederation of Thailand
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMF-TC	International Metal Workers' Federation, Thailand Committee
ITF	International Transport Workers' Federation
ITS	International Trade Secretariat
JCC	Joint Consultation Committee
LCT	Labor Congress of Thailand
LRC	Labor Relations Commission
NCTL	National Congress of Thai Labor
NFL	National Free Labor League
NLDAB	National Labor Development Advisory Board
PSI	Public Services International
PMAT	Personnel Management Association of Thailand
TTUC	Thai Trade Union Congress
TMA	Thai Management Association
WCL	World Confederation of Labor
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
ITGLWF	International Textile, Garment, and Leather Workers' Federation

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